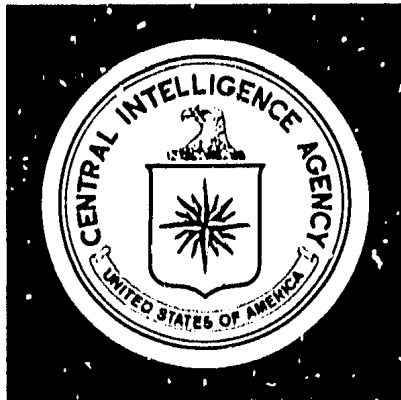


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SOUTH VIETNAM

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ICCS Maneuvering

The Communists in Vietnam are trying to reduce the scope of the ICCS by urging a cutback in its personnel. Hanoi and the PRG have sent diplomatic notes to the members of the ICCS proposing that they "consider immediately" such a cutback. The language of the notes suggests that Hanoi may be laying the groundwork for a later demand that ICCS regional and local teams be removed, leaving only the ICCS headquarters in Saigon.

The Communist side, using the argument that the ICCS should be basically a mediating rather than an investigative body, has been pushing for a reduction in ICCS activities almost since the commission's establishment. This effort does not necessarily indicate that Hanoi plans to step up its military or political activity in the countryside, but it does suggest that the Communists chafe under the political and psychological inhibitions imposed by the presence of ICCS teams throughout the country.

The Communists probably would like to reshape the ICCS before the new Iranian team gets established. They probably will use the commission's recurrent financial difficulties to back up their argument that its activities should be curtailed. Even if this Communist pressure fails, the ICCS is not likely to be as vigorous as it was before Canada's departure. The Iranians will probably play a more passive role than the Canadians did, and in any case it will take them some time to get the feel of the situation. There is no indication that the Communist members of the ICCS, Poland and Hungary, intend to be any more cooperative than in the past, although Poland has stopped suggesting that it might withdraw.

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CAMBODIA

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On The Road (Again) With Sihanouk

The much-traveled Prince Sihanouk early this week climbed down from his soapbox in Peking and went to Algiers to play a prominent role in the Fourth Nonaligned Conference. Sihanouk and members of his Peking-based Royal Government of National Union (RGNU) have for some time been making careful preparations for the conference, where they expect to gain points at Phnom Penh's expense. The seating of the RGNU delegation will provide considerable grist for Khmer Communist propaganda mills.

An aide-memoire circulated this summer by RGNU representatives has spelled out some of Sihanouk's political objectives at the conference, including:

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- a condemnation of US "aggression in Cambodia";
- diplomatic recognition of the RGNU by all countries represented at the conference;
- support for the seating of the RGNU at the upcoming UN General Assembly;
- and the election of Sihanouk as a vice president of the plenary session at the conference.

The forum will almost certainly issue a resolution condemning US actions in Indochina, particularly in Cambodia. A resolution recommending unanimous diplomatic recognition of the RGNU may be forthcoming. Such a resolution would not be binding, however. At the conference Sihanouk and his allies may well succeed in pushing through some loosely-worded statement bearing on Cambodia and the UN, but most nations represented at Algiers can be expected

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to go their own way in New York. As for Sihanouk's bid for a vice presidential post, he will probably have to trade off his chances to gain acceptance on other issues. On the whole, Sihanouk's delegation will probably leave Algiers quite satisfied.

Phnom Penh, for its part, has for some time been resigned to a political setback at the conference. It did not even attempt to send a delegation since Algeria has afforded diplomatic recognition to the RGNU and would almost certainly have refused to issue visas to any representatives of the Lon Nol government. Instead, Phnom Penh has mounted a "counteroffensive" aimed at gathering support for an anticipated credentials debate at the UN. To this end, government leaders in Phnom Penh last week launched a propaganda campaign against Sihanouk. It denounced his collaboration with the Vietnamese Communists and publicized his claims that he is struggling to make Cambodia a Communist country. Phnom Penh has also recently stepped up its efforts to gain diplomatic recognition in Africa and South America.

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NORTH VIETNAM

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Reconstruction Still the Party Line

Premier Pham Van Dong's National Day speech on 1 September commemorating North Vietnam's 28th anniversary of the August Revolution and the founding of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1945, suggests that the regime remains committed to a policy that emphasizes adherence to the cease-fire agreement and the economic reconstruction of the North.

Dong declared that it is in the interests of the Vietnamese people, Hanoi, and the PRG "to strictly respect and scrupulously implement the Paris Agreement," and that world opinion should condemn the US and Saigon for their continued violation of the accords. He noted that the Communists are prepared to continue their struggle until the other side fully implements the agreement.

Dong paid considerable attention to economic reconstruction in North Vietnam and noted that "the immediate task is to rapidly heal the wounds of war...and rehabilitate and develop production." His progress report on reconstruction since the cease-fire notes that the railroads and highways have been repaired and that many industrial enterprises are now operating to some extent. Dong acknowledged that the long-term economic plan for the country was still in the "thinking out" stage. He paid lip service to the "success" of his recent visit to various Communist countries, thanking them for their support and assistance during the war.

National Day pronouncements from North Vietnam tend to be more laden with platitudes than Hanoi's normal output, and no definite conclusions can be drawn from Dong's speech. Still, it is noteworthy that in the wake of recent articles in the army daily advocating a more aggressive military line in the South, Dong confined himself to a restatement of the standard North Vietnamese position.

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INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

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Chinese Aid to PRG

Peking announced that one of its small coastal freighters delivered a shipment of Chinese aid to the Communist-held port of Dong Ha in northern South Vietnam on 1 September. According to an NCNA account, this material was part of a Chinese economic assistance grant to the PRG concluded in mid-July. It almost certainly includes no military equipment.

The NCNA report went to some length to make it clear that the shipment is consistent with Peking's position that the Vietnam war has formally ended and reconstruction started, and that China is not playing fast and loose with the cease-fire agreement.

The delivery puts Peking squarely behind Vietnamese Communist efforts to depict the PRG as equal in international stature to the Thieu government. The NCNA account implied that the Chinese plan additional direct deliveries to the PRG.

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